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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/526,984	09/23/2005	Didier Roziere	0501-1127	6990

466 7590 10/12/2006

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EXAMINER

ZHU, JOHN X

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2858

DATE MAILED: 10/12/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/526,984	ROZIERE, DIDIER	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	John Zhu	2858	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 August 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4-17, 19 and 20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 5 and 6 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 1,2,4,7-17 and 20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 19 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 04 August 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 4/19/2006.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. Response to communications filed on 8/4/2006.
2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1, 4 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kronberg (5,315,884) in view of Roziere et al. (FR 2,756,048).

With respect to claim 1, Kronberg discloses a capacitive proximity sensor comprising at least one detection antenna (Fig. 2, plate array 30) comprising a plurality of capacitive proximity sensors each with a measurement electrode (plates 32, 34 and 36), electronic means (Fig. 4c, circuit module 52) for exciting the electrodes and processing signals from the electrodes, and digital means (computer or process controller, column 5, lines 38-41) for controlling and processing proximity measurements.

Kronberg does not disclose the electronic means comprise for each detection antenna, a floating capacitive bridge cooperating with polling means to measure sequentially the respective capacitances between each electrode of antenna and the object or body to be measured.

Roziere discloses a floating capacitive bridge (Applicant's spec, page 11, lines 14-23) with polling means (Fig. 6, MUX) that sequentially take the input from the electrodes to be processed.

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the floating capacitive bridge with polling means as taught by Roziere into the system of Kronberg for the purpose of reducing the effects of parasitic capacitances (Page 1, lines 8-13).

With respect to claim 4, it is noted that features of an apparatus must be recited either structurally or functionally, and claims directed to an apparatus must be distinguished from the prior art in terms of structure rather than function. Since claim 4 recites functional language of measuring, the structure is identical to the structure of claim 1, which is rejected in view of Kronberg and Roziere.

With respect to claim 11, Kronberg further discloses delivering proximity detection threshold signals (Column 7, lines 25-30) used to measure the distance between the sensor and an object.

4. Claims 2 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kronberg and Roziere as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Branish.

With respect to claims 2 and 9, Kronberg and Roziere do not explicitly disclose a single shield for all the measurement electrodes of the antenna arranged to modify the field lines of the electrodes.

Vranish discloses a single shield (Fig. 4c, shield 2) for all the measurement electrodes (sensing elements 12) arranged to modify the field lines of the electrodes.

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the single shield as taught by Vranish into the system of Kronberg and Roziere for the purpose of insulating the sensing elements for interfering signals.

5. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kronberg and Roziere as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Coveley (5,952,835).

With respect to claim 7, Kronberg and Roziere do not explicitly disclose delivering an alarm signal indicating an inconsistent measurement.

Coveley discloses setting off an alarm when a measurement is deemed to be inconsistent (outside a predetermined threshold, column 4, lines 60-64).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the alarm condition as taught by Coveley into the system of Kronberg and Roziere for the purpose of indicating that an object is removed from the sensing plate (Column 4, lines 60-61).

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6. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kronberg and Roziere as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Stanley et al. (6,703,845 B2).

With respect to claim 8, Kronberg and Roziere do not explicitly disclose reference capacitances provided to check the calibration.

Stanley discloses reference capacitances (Column 10, lines 27-28) for checking the calibration of the measuring system.

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the reference capacitances as taught by Stanley into the system of Kronberg and Roziere for the purpose of allowing the system of continuously compensate for variations in the measurement circuit (Column 10, lines 27-29).

7. Claims 10, 12 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kronberg and Roziere as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Lane (5,623,552).

With respect to claims 10 and 14, Kronberg and Roziere do not explicitly disclose the proximity detector is arranged on the outside surface of a box and comprises a plurality of measurement areas equipped with detection antennas. Kronberg and Roziere also do not disclose edge antennas arranged in part over one face of cap and in part over another contiguous face.

Lane discloses a proximity sensor with multiple areas of proximity detectors (Fig. 4, detectors 140) arranged on the outside of a box in which edge antennas are arranged in part over one face of cap and in part over another face.

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the box structure and edge antennas as taught by Lane into the system of Kronberg and Roziere for the purpose of detecting a the presence of a fingerprint.

With respect to claim 12, Kronberg further discloses the sensor delivering analog signals of distance measurement between the sensor and the objects detected (Column 6, lines 36-38).

8. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kronberg, Roziere and Lane as applied to claim 10 above, and further in view of Crawford (US PG Pub no. 2002/0122006).

With respect to claim 13, Kronberg, Roziere and Lane disclose all aspects of the claim except for the antennas are arranged on five faces of the box or cap.

Crawford discloses a box antenna with antennas arranged on five faces of the box or cap ("two or more noncoplanar walls", Abstract, lines 1-3).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the antenna system of Kronberg to incorporate the plural antennas on walls as taught by Crawford for the purpose of sensing signals

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for all direction to address the multipath problem of multipath environments (Page 1, paragraph 0005).

9. Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kronberg and Roziere as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Lind (6,225,939 B1).

With respect to claim 15, Kronberg and Roziere do not explicitly disclose at least one of the antennas is produced using a flexible circuit.

Lind discloses an impedance sheet which could be used for proximity measurement comprising a flexible dielectric material (Fig. 1, dielectric 20) in between conductors (impedance elements 22).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the flexible sheet as taught by Lind into the system of Kronberg and Roziere for the purpose of reliability and endurance as a strong flexible material would not be as easily subjected to breaks and fissures.

10. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kronberg and Roziere as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of McDonnell et al. (6,348,862 B1).

With respect to claim 16, Kronberg and Roziere disclose all aspects of the claim except for at least one of the antennas is connected to the electronic means by flexible connecting means.

McDonnell discloses flexible connecting means (Fig. 3, cable 58) is used to connect the antenna to the electronic means (Fig. 1, sensor circuit).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the flexible connecting means as taught by McDonnell into the system of Kronberg and Roziere for the purpose of providing a reliable medium for connecting the antenna and the electronics.

11. Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kronberg and Roziere as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Habraken et al. (5,883,935).

With respect to claim 17, Kronberg and Roziere do not explicitly disclose the proximity sensor used in an x-ray machine with a proximity detector arranged on the inside or outside of a cap, with an x-ray antenna comprises a piercing provided for the passage of the x-ray beam.

Habraken discloses a proximity detector with an x-ray machine with detectors formed on the cap (Fig. 1, detector 6) with an x-ray emitter (4) providing an x-ray beam through the piercing (Fig. 2a, circular passage).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the x-ray machine with piercing and proximity detector as taught by Habraken into the system of Kronberg and Roziere for the purpose of detecting an object when performing a radiological test.

12. Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kronberg and Roziere as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Travanty et al. (4,987,583).

With respect to claim 20, Kronberg and Roziere do not explicitly disclose a proximity detector arranged on the inside or outside surface of an x-ray emitter device.

Travanty discloses proximity sensors (Fig. 1, pressure sensors 46, 49) on an x-ray emitter device (X-ray source 14).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the proximity sensors as taught by Travanty into the system of Kronberg and Roziere for the purpose of detecting a collision between a component and a patient under test in a x-ray apparatus (Abstract, lines 1-4).

Allowable Subject Matter

13. Claims 5 and 6 are allowed.

14. Claim 19 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

15. Claim 5 is allowable over the art of record because the prior art does not teach or suggest a detection antenna comprises a test track which in normal operation, is at the potential of a shield and in test mode, is earthed.

Claim 6 is allowable as it depends from claim 5.

Claim 19 is allowable over the art of record because the prior art does not teach or render obvious the entire combination including an x-ray antenna comprising a copper layer being removed over an area which corresponds to the passage of the X-ray beam and in which the linking tracks and the capacitive electrodes are produced from the chromium layer.

Response to Arguments

16. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 2, 4-17, 19 and 20 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

The argument centers around the combination of the Kronberg and Roziere references. Applicant states the Roziere reference *"does not disclose measurement of capacitance between an electrode and an object or body to be measured"* (Page 11, last paragraph to Page 12, line 2). However, this statement is disputed and not consistent with the content of the reference. Roziere states a capacitive type measurement system comprising a measurement electrode (Fig. 1, element 15). The type of measurement at hand involves distance (Page 4, lines 10-13) and is between the measurement electrode and an object (earth electrode, fig. 1, element 16), of which reads on the instant application. Furthermore, it is noted that the applicant's own specification has admitted that the type of floating capacitive bridge can be used (Page 4, lines 25-29).

With respect to the argument that it would not have been obvious to combine Kronberg and Roziere because one dealt with a frequency modulation scheme while the other dealt with an amplitude modulation scheme (Page 12, paragraph 2), the examiner respectfully disagrees. Under closer inspection, the technology of both Kronberg and Roziere deal with the same pertinent problem of capacitive proximity sensing. In addition, both involve supplying an oscillating signal to the electrodes. The motivation found the references themselves (reducing parasitic capacitance) is sufficient for one of ordinary skill in the art to combine.

In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention (Page 12, paragraph 3 to page 13, paragraph 1), it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., one electrode in the present claim versus at least two in the references) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). The qualifier "*comprising*" allows there to more than just one electrode per sensor. Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John Zhu whose telephone number is (571) 272-5920. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 8-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Andrew Hirshfeld can be reached on (571) 272-2168. The fax phone

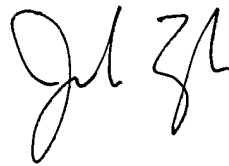
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number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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